

# Down and dirty with creek clean-up

It's hard to imagine how someone could justify dumping trash in a creek.



**Shannon Carey**

Groups of volunteers got out and took action to clean out our local creeks by participating in the 11th annual Community Wide Creek Clean-Up on Saturday, Oct. 15. The project was sponsored by the Water Quality Forum and CAC AmeriCorps.

Two of the five countywide creek sites were in our area: Beaver Creek behind Food City in Halls and First Creek behind Northgate Plaza just south of Fountain City.

AmeriCorps volunteers provided groups with waders, gloves, trash bags and other equipment. Ecology clubs from Halls and Fulton high schools attended, as well as other concerned citizens.

Some of the clean-up was normal trash collecting, but some items required the entire team's muscle.

The results were astonishing.

Beaver Creek volunteers pulled 1,000 pounds of assorted garbage from Beaver Creek's bed and banks. The more interesting items included a tractor-trailer oil filter, a muffler, a child-size motorized car, a microwave and a few grocery carts.

For an idea of how long the carts had been there, they were from Winn-Dixie and Revco.

Volunteers collected 1,500 pounds of assorted trash from First Creek. Interesting items from this location included a squirrel trap, a portable stereo, a fire extinguisher, a bumper and an 18-wheeler hubcap.

This section of First Creek also held 10 grocery carts and 10 car tires.

Over the last 10 years of the Creek Clean-Up program, 1,665 volunteers have pulled 335 tons of trash from Knox County creeks.

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AmeriCorps volunteer Chris Reynolds and Halls student Taylor Baxter loosen a grocery cart embedded in Beaver Creek. (Photos by S. Carey)



Halls students Brittany Chamberlain, Katlyn Gipson, Kimberly Cooper and Justin Cox put their backs into it to pull heavy junk from Beaver Creek.



Halls High ecology teacher Kerrie Coley collects garbage along Beaver Creek.



Fulton students Darryl Oliver and Houston "Jack" Miller display the trash they pulled from First Creek. (Photo by Khann Chov)